

Prospects and Challenges in Post-Apartheid South Africa

Toward the Next Millennium

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ABSTRACT

Although South Africa remains an economic and political bell-wether of a mineral rich continent, its position could be in doubt within the context of the historicity and specificity of post-colonial Africa, with its debt crisis, political instability and civil wars. This essay argues that these conditions could be averted if the republic learns from the mistakes of other African countries by addressing the issues of leadership, education and poverty. In this way, South Africa's democratic genre and economic success might serve as a model for the rest of Africa.

Introduction

THE PERIOD immediately following WWII was a watershed in the political history of Africa. Black nationalists both in the continent and diaspora pressed for independence from the various colonial powers. Indeed, many nationalists argued in the colonial capitals that if these powers had objections to Hitler dominating the world, the oppressed peoples of the African colonies did not want to be dominated by these powers. Thus, they demanded freedom from the colonialists. It goes without saying that as a result of the pressure brought to bear on London, Paris, Lisbon, Brussels, etc., the European empires in Africa started to crumble one after the other. In some cases freedom was handed over to the nationalist on a "platter of gold," and in other occasions, the patriots took up arms as was the case in Algeria, Kenya and Angola, just to cite a few examples.

In Southern Africa, the political equation was slightly different. Following WWI, South-West Africa (Namibia), a German colony, was ceded to South Africa as a trust territory by Britain which had a mandate over the area. The history of Namibia became intertwined with that of South Africa. Several attempts made

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by the international community to urge South Africa to grant independence to Namibia failed until March 21, 1990. Before this date, South Africa was a pariah state in Africa and elsewhere because of her recalcitrant attitude toward Namibia and apartheid policy (or policy of separate development of the races), too.

The political development in South Africa cannot be divorced from its history and “tribal” configurations. It is the complex mix of its social, economic, and political interactions that has continually shaped the very character of the polity since the arrival of the Europeans. This disquisition briefly describes the history of this area and analyzes the prospects and challenges that the republic faces as it marches toward the next millennium.

Brief history

The Portuguese were the first to arrive in South Africa in 1488, then the Dutch settlers in 1652, out of which emerged in 1679, the Boers (farmers). In later years, the French and the Germans joined to form what later became the Cape Colony. And like the proverbial north African camel, the indigenous Khoikhoi and others were elbowed out of their territories and made servants. Additionally, the settlers imported slaves from Southeast Asia while developing the Afrikaner language as the *lingua franca*.

From 1770 to 1870, the expansion of white settlements led to the confiscation of lands from the Xhosas and other Bantu-speaking ethnic groups. The “traditional” European wars spilled over to South Africa in 1795. In the war between France and the Netherlands, Holland was conquered, and to prevent France from “usurping” South Africa, the British occupied the Cape colony. Britain gave back the colony to the Dutch in 1803, but later occupied it in 1806. In 1814, the Netherlands ceded the area to Britain. By 1820, the British not only settled in the Cape colony but also raided the Xhosa, capturing more land. By 1828, the British made English the official language and issued Ordinance 50 (Giliome and Schlemmer 1991:2), which granted the Khoi-khoi and “colored” people equal rights with whites. In 1833, the British abolished slavery throughout its empire; the Boers who resented this fiat made the Great Trek in 1836, conquering in its wake the KwaZulus in Natal and establishing the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Indeed, Britain later conquered Natal in 1843, and granted independence to Transvaal in 1852 and the Orange Free State in 1854. Between the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Dutch and British were involved in a number of intermittent wars (dubbed the First and Second Boer Wars). On May 31, 1910, the Union of South Africa was created without black input. In 1912, the African National Congress was founded, and in 1948, the National Party came to power. In 1961, South Africa became a republic. (See Dostert 1996:118-127; Kiewiet 1964:1-29; Moleah 1993:1-42; Thompson

1990:154-186.) In fact, it is within this historical context that the socioeconomic and political developments in the polity might be discerned.

Post World War II

It was immediately following WWII that Daniel Francois Malan reorganized the National Party and acceded to power in 1948 under an apartheid platform of separate development for the races. This policy was implemented with several draconian laws (e.g., the pass laws). Moreover, he argued that because the black ethnic groups hated each other so profoundly, that if the whites did not control their antagonism, the possible civil war that might erupt between these groups could have disastrous consequences for the country (The World Book Encyclopedia 1997).

Retrospectively, the catastrophic effect of apartheid laws enacted from 1948 to 1994 created the groundwork for the true emancipation of the black majority population, and in the process the entire country itself. The establishment of the black ghetto, known as Soweto, the Sharpsville massacre, violation of human rights, assassination of the human rights activist, Steve Biko, and the creation of a triracial parliament that excluded the blacks were some of the major events that pricked the conscience of the international community and galvanized the community of nations against the policies of Pretoria. Indeed, it is against the backdrop of these records and policies that the entire edifice of the political metamorphoses in South Africa could be further comprehended, and perhaps appreciated. It was a forgone conclusion that apartheid was going to die due to political, social and economic reasons. The question before the 1994 elections, however, was when? This essay does not concern itself with the various epochal developments leading to the all-race elections of April 27, 1994. Rather, it examines, *inter alia*, the uniqueness of South Africa within the political matrix of African politics. And, in the popular reggae lyrics or vernacular “now that we have found love, what are we going to do with it?” In the South African case, now that the country has found genuine political freedom, what is it going to do with it? This query issues from the fact that the democratic euphoria and political honeymoon in the republic may soon be over.

1994 Democratic Elections and Prospects

Popular elections remain one of the bedrocks of a truly democratic society. But the process can be conflictive especially in divided societies of the developing nations. South Africa remains a unique case dating back to 1910 when the Act of the Union was signed proclaiming the formation of a racially exclusive state (Handley and Herbst 1977). In spite of the political anomalies which effectively “dehumanized” and marginalized, politically, the majority black population, there

was the conviction, on the part of the disenfranchised Africans that, in the prophetic aphorism of the civil rights movement in America, "... we shall overcome someday." Indeed, it could be argued that it was that belief that nourished and sustained Nelson Mandela in prison for twenty-seven years. Unlike the United States, where the blacks were and are in the minority, in South Africa, blacks were and are in the majority. And majority rule represents one of the fundamental axioms of democratic theory, philosophy, tradition and practice. For example, in 1991, South African population by racial groups showed that blacks made up 74.8 percent, whites 14.1 percent, colored 8.5 percent and Asians 2.6 percent of the republic (Spence 1994:4).

It has been said, proverbially, that "those whom the devil wishes to destroy, it first makes mad." The 1948 apartheid policy of Malan, and the subsequent policies which flowed from this law, were as a result of apprehension that if nothing was done to control the majority blacks, the whites might be on the losing end in a truly democratic society. Therefore, the black political ambition must be checked. Thus, it was in the interest of the custodians of power to defer or, at least, delay the opening up of the political space to the nonwhite groups through apartheid.

To be sure, in any political calculation, it would not be in the interest of the black and white political class to destroy the state. Thus, black and white political and economic entrepreneurs, and other elites, in later years, came to realize that black militancy and external pressure could foment a revolution that was likely to destroy their vested interest in the country. To destroy the State in the pursuit of group interest(s), in the views of many, would have been the very antithesis of the objective of the majority nonwhite collectivities whose *raison d' état* was to someday govern the South African polity. Arguably, it was against the background of this conceptual framework that the April 1994 all-race elections should be comprehended and probably viewed as a victory for most South Africans.

The following (major) political parties participated in the electoral contestation of April 27, 1994: African National Congress (ANC), National Party (NP), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Democratic Party (DP), Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), and the Minority Front (MF).

Table 1 shows the percentage of votes cast in each of the nine provinces and the National Assembly for the major political parties.

The ANC victory in the provinces and National Assembly gave Nelson Mandela enough power to seek retribution on the forces that had marginalized and disenfranchised black South Africans, but that would not promote unity, stability and harmony in the country (Clark 1993). In fact, in his tribute to Nelson Mandela, John Chettle (1997) writes:

The lessons of history are sometimes learned as much from what did not happen as from what did. Thus a historian on a slow day might ask himself [or herself] what

Table 1
Political Parties and Percentage of Votes

Province	ANC	NP	IFP	FF	DP	PAC	ACDP	MF	Others
Western Cape	33.0	53.3	–	2.1	6.5	–	1.2	–	3.8
Northern Cape	49.7	40.5	–	6.0	1.9	–	–	–	1.9
Eastern Cape	84.4	9.8	–	–	2.1	2.0	–	–	1.7
North West	83.3	8.8	–	4.6	–	–	–	–	3.3
Orange Free	76.6	12.6	–	6.0	–	–	–	–	4.8
State PWV*	57.7	23.9	3.7	6.2	5.3	1.5	0.6	–	1.2
Northern Transvaal	91.6	3.3	–	2.2	–	–	–	–	2.9
Eastern Transvaal	80.7	9.0	–	5.7	–	–	–	–	4.6
KwaZulu Natal	32.2	11.2	50.3	–	2.2	0.7	0.7	1.3	1.4
National Assembly	62.65	20.39	10.54	2.17	1.73	1.25	0.45	–	0.82

Source: Andrew Reynold, ed. 1995. *Elections '94 South Africa: The Campaigns, Results and Future Prospects*. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 202-203.

* PWV: Pretoria Witwatersrand Vereeniging.

would have happened if Nelson Mandela, [who was in jail for 27 years because of his political convictions], on taking office, had denounced his opponents and then taken draconian measures against them. What if Mandela had gone on to seize their lands, remove [or revoke] their rights of citizenship, ban them from certain occupations, and levy fines and heavy taxes upon them? What if, following such actions, a million whites, including most of those prominent in government, business, and the bureaucracy, had fled South Africa? (P. 64)

Mandela's magnanimity in victory, as well as in travail, is a unique feature among many Africans. Witness, for example, Jomo Kenyatta's speech following independence in Kenya when he urged the whites and Africans to close ranks and

work together in spite of the consequences of the Mau Mau war of independence. The same was also true in Zimbabwe and Nigeria following those countries' civil wars (Udogu 1997b).

1994 Constitution

An election in and of itself cannot rectify the history of long-term structural or institutional defects, and problems inherited from the National Party, and apartheid in one fell swoop. Therefore, mechanisms and instrumentalities for mitigating the negative effects of the apartheid structure in the new South Africa must be devised and institutionalized. One of such measures was a post-apartheid constitution. Informed by the experience of the past thirty years or so, John M. Mbaku has argued that what most African states need on the eve of the next millennium is a genuine and effective constitutional discourse; one that should involve the maximization of participation of every segment of the population in the process of national governance and development (Mbaku 1996). The crafting of an efficacious constitution to further stability in the republic was not an easy task. In the final analysis, however, a constitution that took cognizance of the historicity and specificity of the South African experience was promulgated. In particular, it took into consideration the sensitivities of the ethnic and racial strata in the system.

David Welsh (1994) described the new constitution thus:

The interim constitution is classically liberal-democratic in form. Its major features are: a bicameral parliamentary system based upon the principle of the sovereignty of the constitution; a justiciable bill of rights; an independent judiciary, including a constitutional court; an electoral system based upon proportional representation; and hybrid federal/unitary arrangements. (P. 29)

The writing of a superb constitution that theoretically outlines how the political actors and citizens are to behave in order to promote good governance is an important step. But, what is required is the practical application of the tenets or clauses of the constitution to truly realize the objectives of the document. In short, the major political actors must not only be committed to playing according to the rules of the political game, but must demonstrate in their actions the belief and adherence to the concept of constitutionalism, whereby the political czars in the republic cannot use extra-constitutional powers in attempts to pursue their parochial interests (Udogu 1997a).

The centrality of this discussion as it relates to the post-apartheid constitution are the provisions intended to promote the atomization of the South African polity, as it became increasingly obvious that the political "changing of the guard" to a black majority rule was eminent. Politics has been defined simplistically as the struggle for power, the authoritative allocation of values, and in the classical

Lasswellian tradition, who gets what, when, and how. But in these definitions, the overarching feature is power. So, an a priori assumption is that whoever controlled power determined how major resources are to be allocated, the kind of legislation that are promulgated, etc. The National Party's policies from 1948 to early 1990s are good cases in point. For instance, the 1983 constitution which created a triracial (or tricameral) parliament for the colored, Indians, and whites (Collier's Encyclopedia:269) supports the above thesis. The blacks were conspicuously left out or treated as "*persona non grata*" in the republic.

It was against the backdrop of these historical facts, and attempts to avoid earlier pitfalls, that the framers of the new constitution adopted provisions that were likely to ameliorate the conflicting struggle for power. In this regard, a power-sharing device or in the words of Arend Lijphart, a consociational democracy was implemented. This is a mutual consensus building arrangement among the political entrepreneurs of diverse ethnic groups for the purpose of successful governing (Lijphart 1967).

Arend Lijphart, has written extensively in support of power-sharing in South Africa (and other divided societies), as a possible way of exculpating that country from its hitherto political quagmire. This is a view that is also echoed by David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild (1996). Indeed, in his more recent works, Lijphart alludes to a series of tenets in the new constitution to buttress his earlier opinion.

For instance, Article 88 (of the new constitution) provides for a "government of unity in which all parties with a minimum of 5 percent of the seats in the National Assembly may participate." This compromise, contends Lijphart, represents a government by grand coalition.

Article 32 states that "every person shall have the right. . . to establish, where practicable, educational institutions based on a common culture, language or religion, provided that there shall be no discrimination on the grounds of race." This view authenticates the notion of group autonomy, decentralization and certain characteristics of federalism (although the constitution is an hybrid or eclectic form of federal and unitary systems).

Election by proportional representation is stated in Article 40. The logical basis for this provision flows from the ethnic and racial complexions of the republic. It could be contended that for a constitution to be efficacious, the participation of both the majority and minority groups in the process of governance is imperative for the promotion of a sense of nationalism or patriotism. Indeed, this view approximates Mandela's speech entitled "Our struggle is against all forms of racism" delivered, in New York, on June 21, 1990 (Clark 1993:29-34). Political crisis in much of Africa derives in part from the marginalization of minority ethnic groups who are often denied amenities because they lack the numerical clout to compete for scarce resources (Udogu 1994). This problem tends to be exacerbated in systems that adopt the zero-sum-game politics.

Article 73 provides for a “minority veto power” in the sense that it would take “two-thirds majority requirement for amending the constitution and for adopting a new constitutional text by a Constitutional Assembly, composed of members of the National Assembly.” The idea here is to slow down the possibility of the majority group using its numerical strength in parliament to introduce changes that could be inimical to the overall interest of the polity (Lijphart 1995). The manipulation of national constitutions by political parties in power has been a problem in many African countries. Indeed, until recently, Kamuzu Banda of Malawi was able to manipulate the constitution of that country so that he was declared President-for-life — a title that always suffixed his name in the national media and elsewhere.

The effectiveness of the South African constitution will rest on the political attitude of the ANC, the dominant political party in the republic, and the other custodians of power. It is hoped that the aforementioned provisions would be allowed to endure and prosper even after Mandela leaves active politics in 1999. Political liberalization or political space enlargement will be hollow without a strong and sustaining economy. It is to this dimension that I now focus the proceeding analysis.

Economy

Democracy and the rule of law are said to have thrived in North America and elsewhere because of economic prosperity in these systems (Udogu 1997a). In Africa, most economic indicators suggest that the prospects for development are dismal (United Nations Development Program 1997). But, this hampers the development of democracy. Little wonder, then, that Chettle (1997) noted:

[The African nations] are operating in a world where investment funds are limited and in which almost everyone professes to follow the free market. Business follows the money, and there isn't much money in Africa. Forty percent of Sub-Saharan Africa's 600 million people live on less than one dollar a day. The continent receives less than 3 percent of foreign direct investment flowing into developing countries. In 1995, it received \$2.1 billion — less than China received in two months. According to this view, without education, without infrastructure, without consumer buying power, and without stable governments, Africa looks increasingly hopeless. This view may be exaggerated, but is nonetheless very pervasive. (P. 66)

In spite of the gloomy and grim analysis, South Africa could serve as an anchor and economic bellwether in Africa given its enormous natural resources and superb infrastructure. It remains the richest and most economically developed and viable country in the continent. It covers only 4 percent of Africa's land mass with a population of approximately 6 percent. It generates two-fifth of the continent's manufactured goods, about half of its minerals, and a fifth of its

agricultural products (Simkins 1994). In fact, in 1994 “manufacturing contributed about 24 percent of South Africa’s GDP, financial services 17 percent, trade (including hotels and tourism) 16 percent, public administration and government services 15 percent, mining 9 percent, agriculture 5 percent, and construction 3 percent. South Africa’s GDP was about \$120 billion” (Collier’s Encyclopedia 1997:272; see Stremlau and Zille 1997). The Human Development Report for 1997 ranked South Africa 90th on “profile of human poverty” and well above most African countries (United Nations Development Program, 1997).

Given its economic and political base, the country is not only likely to do lucrative business within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), but also with much of Sub-Saharan Africa. In light of the present political dispensation, the economic prospects for South Africa could be phenomenal. But the republic’s objectives of political stability and economic well being could be attained if it is able to successfully confront its challenges.

Challenges

The challenges that South Africa might be faced with are enormous especially after the quinquennial elections scheduled for 1999. This is so because the history and lessons of post-independence Africa are not reassuring. The emergence of despotic, autocratic and military leaders of different political hue has exacerbated the political and economic problems in the continent. Indeed, the malaise created by these actors is identical in Algiers, Bangui, Ouagadougou, Kampala, Lilongwe, Abuja and Freetown, just to list a few. The hope is that South Africa will not emulate the political history of these countries.

It is possible, however, that South Africa is likely to face major challenges in the areas of leadership, education, and poverty, *inter alia*.

Leadership

John R. Cartwright has noted that “leadership is a phenomenon which we all think we can recognize, but which becomes elusive and changeable when we try to analyze it” (Cartwright 1983:19). Charles E. Merriam also asserts: “the precise nature of leadership is one of the most difficult problems in the domain of politics, or indeed, in social action, yet it is one of the most real phenomena in political and social behavior” (Merriam 1966:107). Bennett A. Odunsi conceptualizes leadership in a roughly similar sense (Odunsi 1997:66-81).

Nelson Mandela has demonstrated enormous leadership in the republic and the continent, too. It is true that an individual’s charisma cannot be successfully transferred from one leader to another, and in this case from Mandela to his possible successor. It was characteristic of Mandela, that despite the ethnic and

racial complexions of the republic and the often antagonistic group interest(s), to observe with oracular percipience that South Africa was divided like the fingers but united like a fist. His speech: "We cannot afford to stand divided" delivered to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on September 8, 1990, in Kampala, Uganda "jibes" with this conception (Clark 1993:44-47). Indeed, in the Jeffersonian tradition, he believes that all humankind are created equal, and therefore must be given the opportunity to fulfil their vital needs.

But, there can be no leaders without followers. James Mac-Gregor Burns maintains that "leadership is an aspect of power, but it is also a separate and vital process in itself. . . leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purpose mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers. This is done in order to realize goals mutually held by both leaders and followers" (Burns 1978:18).

Mandela is greatly respected by the black population and a sizable number of admirers from the other groups because of his life's struggle for the emancipation of "all" South Africans (Mandela 1994:121-169). These groups have followed his leadership because they see him as one able to articulate and support their various interests. Indeed, he has seldom displayed the arrogance of power characteristic of the political leadership of many African leaders. For example, he appointed Mangosuthu Buthelezi as acting president while he and the deputy president, Thabo Mbeki were overseas attending an international conference, the World Economic Forum (Handley and Heerbst 1997:224).

Some major questions after 1999 when Mandela will not run as president are: will his successor be Thabo Mbeki (a Xhosa) or Cyril Ramaphosa (a Venda), both former members of the South African Communist Party (SACP)? If so, is either one of them likely to be as conciliatory and able to govern pragmatically as Mandela? Is it possible that power struggle within the governing party could emerge and weaken the coalition? Are there other powerful political actors within as well as outside the party who must be reckoned with in the political development? What about the ambitious Buthelezi in the political equation? These are some of the fundamental issues that the regime might have to resolve before and after Mandela leaves the political scene.

But many political scientists and political practitioners agree that when it comes to "realpolitik," a genuine leader believes that the survival of the state and national interest of a country must supersede individual or group ideology in the face of difficulties and governance of a polity. In this regard, perhaps, Deng Xiaoping's aphorism with respect to communist China approximates a leader's behavior pattern vis à vis political ideology, when he said: "It does not matter if a cat is black or white as long as it catches mice." What he implied by this statement was that China was prepared to apply any economic strategy

(capitalism or socialism) to tackle the country's economic underdevelopment. That notwithstanding, Mandela's departure is likely to create a major power vacuum among the blacks. Moreover, Buthelezi's political aspiration must not be taken for granted. After all, he has a strong political base among the Zulus in Natal province and elsewhere. Be that as it may, it is hoped that the new leader after 1999 would be pragmatic in addressing the republic's problems.

Education

It is a given that the challenges of educational reconstruction will continue to tax the government of the new South Africa. The financial appropriation for the majority of the population in apartheid South Africa was infinitesimal. Indeed, Jakes Gerwel has noted that the educational infrastructure for the majority of blacks was characterized by "neglect and underprovision, with crippling shortages in such basic areas as classrooms, libraries, laboratories and textbooks, together with an under-supply of qualified teachers" (Gerwel 1994:82). With respect to the per capita spending on blacks and white pupils, James Moulder noted that in "1987 R6.6 billion was spent on schooling for 6.7 million pupils, with R2.6 billion of that money spent on fewer than a million white pupils and R2.5 billion on more than 4.7 million African pupils" (Moulder 1992:161-173). This policy flowed from the deliberate plan to create a relatively low-skilled labor force from the black community and a racially structured division of labor that was necessary for lubricating the status quo.

The death of apartheid has led to a public discourse and conversation concerning the future of education in the republic. In spite of the various and sometimes contradictory opinions regarding the very nature and character of education in the country, there seems to be a general consensus that:

...education should be nonracial in organization and content; that the principle of non-sexism should operate at all levels; that there be a single system (allowing for regional and other variations); that there should be an integrated approach to education and training; the democratic participation of relevant stakeholders should be ensured and historical imbalances in respect of gender, race and other social factors addressed (Gerwel 1994:85).

In support of some of these axioms, the former president, F.W. de Klerk noted: "While moving away from the racial basis of education, differentiated education based on religious and cultural values and the mother tongue, with equal governmental support, will remain a right for those who desire it" (cited in Gerwel 1994:89). Clearly, this assertion suggests that de Klerk was defending the interest of the Afrikaner population whom he once represented within the framework of multiculturalism.

Arguably, for education to play a meaningful role in any society, and South Africa in particular, certain basic assumptions are worth noting: (a) education falls within the framework of human rights to which everyone must be given equal access, (b) education helps to consolidate and further democratic order, and (c) investment in education promotes social and economic development (Gerwel 1994:84). Again, whereas these proposals are good and probably resonate well among the various publics, the country must build more schools (elementary, secondary and post-secondary) and train more teachers to alleviate the anticipated growth especially among the black population. It goes without saying that pressures to address the past anomalies between black and white educational systems will remain a major challenge to South Africa, as the republic marches into the next millennium.

Poverty

Poverty which is endemic in Africa, and much of the developing nations is vexing in the midst of affluence. But it is a truism, as has been contended elsewhere; that there can be no rich folks without poor folks (Udogu 1994:161). Therefore, policies pursued by the custodians of the state are generally intended to promote their group interest first, and that of the “vocal” opposition, second. Such policies tend to create an immensurable poverty among the lower class — a condition that is furthered by their lack of, or insufficient level of, education.

A recent World Bank statement on South Africa reports that unemployment rates stand at 50 percent among the poor. The lowest 40 percent of households, equivalent to 53 percent of the population, account for less than 10 percent of total consumption. Unfortunately, the change of power in South Africa has not improved the condition for the poor; it has made wealthy the aspiring and educated black middle class (Chettle 1997).

Charles Simkins provides a summary of the economic quagmire that South Africa is confronted with, and out of which it is working diligently to exonerate itself during the past few decades. These are *conjunctural factors*, aggravated by the perplexing international economic conditionalities and the wide spread drought in the homefront; *structural factors*, which in part culminated in low gold price and inadequate commodity prices in recent years; *political factors*, that impact are traceable to international trade, financial sanctions and the concomitant undermining of private sector confidence in the country’s political system (Simkins 1994:65). But how are these challenges to be met?

Within the contemporary debate in the republic, Simkins alludes to the following options that the country might pursue (see Simkins 1994:75-76):

1. A trade liberalization policy, removing protection over time, as part of a program of cutting cost and becoming competitive in world market. . .

2. Selective assistance to sectors of manufacturing regarded as having high export potential if comparative advantage can be created by rapid learning and economies of scale.
3. Building on South Africa's mineral exports base by exporting beneficiated (i.e., processed) rather than raw materials. . .
4. Promoting further industrialization by reallocating domestic demand to sectors believed to be of low import intensity (low-housing, basic consumer goods).

These instrumentalities and strategies could be meaningless if the wealth generated from such policies fail to trickle down to the majority poor. Be that as it may, they represent significant steps in the quest to tackle the issue of the economic infrastructure and superstructure in the society.

Looking Ahead

In sum, the prospect for democracy and democratization in South Africa is promising. In fact, consociational democracy might not only serve as a beacon to the country itself, but also to the region and other divided societies. Also, its role as a regional economic power is demonstrated by its important role within the Southern African Development Community. Politically, its leadership in resolving the complicated political problem in Zaire (or the Democratic Republic of Congo) leading to the abdication of Mobutu Sese Seko, and the ascension of Laurent Kabila to the head of that country's government, points to its political clout in the region and Africa.

These developments notwithstanding, the challenges that the country faces are immense and internal. A country that is divided along ethnic lines is difficult to govern. This was the lesson that Nigeria, Rwanda, Burundi, the Sudan, Somalia and other countries in the continent have learned through their civil wars. Therefore, the power sharing formula as a means of mollifying possible ethnic centrifugal tendencies should be sustained, no matter how tempting it might be for the blacks to use their numerical strength to subvert the constitution.

Inspiring political maxims and a superb constitution itself are worthless if a majority of the population are concerned with daily survival. To this end, one of the major challenges in the republic is the political and economic enfranchisement of the poor. Arguably, the attainment of these objectives are not only likely to promote political stability and empowerment of all South Africans, but also present the country as a unique political and economic model to other African countries; a situation somewhat akin to the United States in the Americas.

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